

Minutes of DAAC Meeting

Attendance

DAAC members present were: Seren Derin, Chair; Joe Tringali, Vice-chair; Gerry Weiss, and Joan Swift;

Others present were Nathaniel Malloy, DAAC staff liaison.

Absent: Irene Barrelet, Clerk; Jim MacRostie; and Dana Goddard.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Derin called the meeting to order at 11:17 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

MINUTES

No minutes were reviewed.

NEW BUSINESS

Jones Library Parking

The committee discussed the upcoming Jones Library Trustee meeting (June 1st), at which the DAAC will request that two pull-in HP spots with a shared unloading area remain at the library. Currently, there are two spaces; however, one does not meet regulations because of an angled curb. Updating the HP parking may reduce the number of overall parking by one space, and this could be a source of concern with the Trustees. The DAAC agreed that with the number of seniors in Amherst and as a cultural destination in the town center, it would be prudent to keep both HP spaces, especially since there is an adequate amount of metered spaces within walking distance of the library.

The DAAC intends to make two requests at the Jones Library Trustee meeting:

1. Keep both HP spots with a center aisle.
2. Designate two roadside spaces (that are currently metered) as free 15-minute drop-off parking.

UMass Variance Request—Brown House

Mr. Malloy reported that he received a variance request from UMass. They are renovating an existing residence hall and did not plan for updating existing bathrooms. The University has assured the DAAC that funds have been earmarked for this project; it just cannot be completed this summer before students return.

The committee agreed that the bathroom plans looked sufficient and that the project could wait until next year. The only concern was that the plans did not indicate a height for the reception counter, although it was assumed to meet the regulations.

North Pleasant St./ Eastman Lane Roundabout

The committee discussed design and development issues regarding the proposed roundabout at the intersection of Eastman Lane and North Pleasant Street. The DAAC agreed that the intersection needs improvements, especially to the flow of vehicular traffic and pedestrian crossings. A roundabout would surely increase the flow of vehicular traffic, and therein lies the concerns of the committee:

- Without crossing signals, the DAAC questioned the safety of all pedestrians who would be crossing at the roundabout. The angled crosswalks to improve sightlines and a refuge island between travel lanes do make it safer to cross the street, but without the added measure of a walk signal, the committee was uncertain that vehicles would actually stop for pedestrians (drivers would be too focused on navigating the roundabout).
- The additional crosswalks located approximately 50 meters outside the roundabout, if safer to use by the mobility impaired, are not along the shortest, most direct route from destinations across the intersection.
- The plans indicate that bike lanes will merge from the street onto the sidewalk near the roundabout, and the DAAC indicated that the speed of cyclists, even with wide sidewalks, could pose a danger to pedestrians.

Variance Request from the Institute for Training and Development (ITD)

Mr. Malloy presented the application for a variance submitted to the Architectural Access Board for the Institute for Training and Development located at 8 Sunset Avenue, Amherst, Massachusetts. ITD intends to convert a large dwelling unit into dormitory-style living to house participants in their program. The variance application requested a number of waivers from the regulations, ranging from leaving an existing kitchen island in place, which makes the kitchen virtually inaccessible, to having only one accessible entrance to the structure.

The Disability Access Advisory Committee agreed that they could not recommend approval of the variance request because of too many outstanding questions with the application. The committee agreed to extend an invitation to staff from the Institute of Training and Development to attend the DAAC's June 8, 2010 meeting. The DAAC had the following concerns:

- Are there two fully accessible entrances and egresses on the first floor?
- How will the kitchen function if it is not accessible?
- Can (and should) the accessible bathroom on the first floor serve the public and residents of the program?
- The size of the accessible bedroom does not appear to provide ample space for wheelchairs and other mobility devices to be used next to the beds. The size of this first floor room seems rather small in comparison to the rooms on the upper levels.
- The addition of a handrail in the stairwell could help those with mobility impairment who still use stairs.
- Would the accessible bedroom (and bathroom) also have facilities for the deaf and hard of hearing?
- Does ITD have a policy that allows for Personal Care Assistants to have keys to the property?
- If the property is not fully accessible, is it fair that handicapped participants must reside in another location?

OLD BUSINESS

Atkins Corner Project

The committee asked for an update on the work at Atkins Corner—specifically pedestrian safety at the roundabouts.

Curb Cuts and Audible Signals at Downtown Intersections

The committee suggested the Select Board, Town Manager and DPW be contacted to inform them that many intersections do not have audible signals, and the crossing time is too slow for the mobility impaired.

HP Ticketing on Private Property

The committee would like to know how many tickets have been issued in the past six months to know if the parking enforcement officers and police are enforcing HP parking [on private property].

Next Meeting(s)

Tuesday June 8, 2010 @ 11:00 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:53 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Nathaniel Malloy, staff liaison